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Senate HAL Appropriations Subcommittee issues budget recommendations

LANSING – On the heels of the Senate History, Arts and Libraries Subcommittee hearing in Kalamazoo on Tuesday, the subcommittee on Thursday reported out their 2005 budget recommendations, said Sen. Tom George, subcommittee chairman.

The subcommittee passed a budget lower than the governor's recommendation. One major shift was the elimination of special funding for the Detroit and Grand Rapids public library. Instead, the money was used to increase funding for arts and cultural grants and the State Aid to Libraries Fund. Special funding for the DPL and GRPL were successfully eliminated by George during the last budget cycle, however, they were once again recommended by the governor.

“These two libraries should not be receiving separate special funding in addition to the regular funding they already receive,” said George, R-Texas Township. “After hearing testimony earlier this week in Kalamazoo, it is obvious that this money will be better used by arts organizations and libraries throughout the entire state.”

Funds also were added to the preservation and access of the Michigan Project. The project is a pilot program to digitize documents being held by local libraries or the state that are considered rare or historically significant to Michigan.

The legislation now goes to the full Senate Appropriations Committee for consideration.

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